

The Anointing of Jesus immediately followed His baptism by John in the Jordan. In like manner, the anointing of the obedient believer with the sanctifying presence and influence of the Spirit follows immediately his own baptism into Christ. This is the Spirit's own promise, as enunciated through the Apostle Peter in the first Gospel sermon ever preached, Acts 2:38—"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." "The chrism of the Spirit was received by our Lord not only with reference to His own needs, but that He might bestow it on all believers. The *whole fountain of the Spirit* is henceforth His, to shower upon His future Church. St. John works out this point in his first Epistle: *you have an anointing (chrisma) from the Holy One . . . the anointing which you received from him abides in you . . . his anointing teaches you concerning all things.* But the thought is not limited to St. John. St. Paul speaks in similar language: *it is God . . . that anointed us, who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.* The chrism which followed baptism in the ancient Church bore witness to the belief that every Christian receives from the Head of the Church the same Divine Unction that descended on the Christ."¹

5. The Spirit and the Ministry of Jesus

Jesus the Christ, the God-Man Redeemer, came into relation with the Spirit at the very beginning of His incarnate life. He came into a fresh relation with the Spirit at His baptism. These relations extended throughout His entire life on earth; the relation was so close, so intimate, that in the Scriptures the designations "Spirit of God," "Holy Spirit," "Spirit of Jesus," and "Spirit of Christ" are used interchangeably.

1. *He was led by the Spirit.* Luke 4:1—"And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led in the Spirit in the wilderness." Matt. 4:1—"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." "Then"—*when?* After His baptism and anointing with the Spirit. Mark 1:12—"And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness." The Anointing was God's sign that

1. H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, 48-49.

Christ's ministry should begin; immediately the Spirit began to impel Him and to direct His activity; first of all, under the direction of the Spirit, He went forth to the Temptation.

The Temptation may be regarded as a necessary factor in the experience of our Lord's human life. Proclaimed by the Father's Voice His Son, the Beloved, the object of the Divine complacency, He was called as Son to learn obedience by the things which He suffered; and without the sharpest suffering of temptation He could not have been perfected. . . . But the Temptation of our Lord was not only a personal discipline needful for the perfecting of His own humanity; it was a first step in the fulfilment of His official work, and the necessary foundation of all that followed. The Temptation holds an essential place in the salvation of mankind. Even if it be held that the Fall is a legend and the first Adam a mythical character, the fact of human sin remains, and sin is a moral defeat which must be reversed if men are to be saved. Moreover, it must be reversed by Man and in Man, as it was sustained by and in Man. Mere sinlessness, unless it were tested by temptation, would not be such a victory; the Second Man must not only be without sin; He must have encountered Sin and overcome it. Further, there was an obvious necessity that the first great victory should be won before the Lord's official life began. The work of that life was to expel the powers of evil which had gained the upper hand in the world, and he who could do this must first repel an attack made by them upon himself.¹

As a matter of fact, God's avouchment of Jesus as His beloved Son, at the latter's baptism in the Jordan, was intended as a challenge to Satan and his rebel host, I believe, as truly as it was intended for mankind. It was a direct notice to the Devil that this was the Woman's Seed in whom, according to the ancient oracle (Gen. 3:15), the redemption of men was to be realized if ever realized at all; and it was at the same time a Divine challenge to the Evil One to come forward to the attack. Hence the Temptation was inevitable. Cf. Luke 4:14—"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee." Returned?—from where? From the wilderness. Under the impulse of the Spirit He had gone to the Temptation, and now in the power of the Spirit He was returning victorious over the Tempter. The Spirit was no longer urging Him to a life of solitude; on the contrary, the Spirit was now impelling Him to the assumption of His public work, of His great mission in the world. Hence, opening His ministry without delay in Galilee, speaking in the synagogue at Nazareth, he took for His text Isaiah's well-known Messianic prophecy (Isa. 61:1-3) and declared expressly that it was then beginning to be ful-

1. H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, 52-53.

filled in Him. Luke 4:17-21: "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was written, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor: He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down: and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, *Today hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.*"

[2. *His preaching was in the power of the Spirit.*] A new teaching!" [the crowds exclaimed (Mark 1:27). The multitudes were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes [Matt. 7:28-29]. [He Himself said]: The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life [John 6:63]. [Again]: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away [Matt. 24:35]. [Cf. Matthew 12:15-21]: And Jesus . . . withdrew from thence; and many followed him; and he healed them all, and charged them that they should not make him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, Behold, my servant whom I have chosen; My beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: *I will put my spirit upon him*, And he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry aloud; Neither shall any one hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, And smoking flax shall he not quench, Till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles hope [Isa. 42:1-4].

[3. *He wrought miracles by the power of the Spirit.*] [Luke 11:20]: But if I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you. [But the expression "finger of God" is, in the Old Testament Scriptures, a metaphor of the Divine Spirit; hence Matthew gives the statement as follows]: But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you [Matt. 12:28; cf. Exo. 8:19, 31:18; Deut. 9:10; Psa. 8:3, 33:6]. [Again; Luke 10:1, 17-18, 21]: Now after these things the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them out two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself was about to come. . . . And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us in thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven. . . . *In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit*, etc. [Through the power given Him by the Holy Spirit to see contemporary events in the light of their eternal issues, He knew that the report brought back by the seventy, of the power they had found themselves able to exercise over unclean spirits, was an unmistakable proof that the beginning of the "binding" of Satan was at hand—a "binding" that would not cease until the Evil One should be cast into the abyss forever (Rev. 20:1-3, 10)]. [Cf. 1 John 3:8]: [To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.] [And because of this knowledge He literally *exulted in the Spirit.*] [And who were these persons

in whom Satan was being subjugated? The wise and powerful of this world? No—they were just “babes,” vessels without honor, in this world.] [Hence, v. 21]: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father; for so it was well-pleasing in thy sight. [He rejoiced that God the Father was using the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. And what was the nature of His joy?] [It was spiritual—in the Spirit and of the Spirit. *How truly is a man's character revealed in the things that cause him to rejoice!*] [Again said Jesus, on another occasion]: The Father abiding in me doeth his works [John 14:10]. [But God abides in men only by His Spirit]: hereby we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit [1 John 4:13]. [Thus Jesus, in this statement, acknowledged the Spirit's leading and power in all the acts of His ministry on earth. Hence said the Spirit through Peter, in the latter's sermon to the house of Cornelius], . . . Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him [Acts 10:38]. [It must be kept in mind, of course, that in Jesus Spirit-power was essentially His own power by nature; He was the Incarnate Logos Himself. “The miracles were the signs of the Presence of God with Jesus, of the Spirit that dwelt in Him, which was stronger than the power of evil, and could set its victims free.”¹]

6. The Spirit and the Atonement

If I remember correctly, it was Epicurus who first posed the celebrated antimony of the *Goodness* of God versus the *power* of God. There is evil in the world, said he: then why does God permit it to be so? If God *can not* eradicate evil, certainly He is not all-powerful; if He *can*, but *does not* eradicate it, on the other hand, then certainly He is not all-good. It must be admitted that this problem still persists in our human thinking, which after all, it must be remembered, is *human*, or, as Spinoza would put it, *sub specie temporis*. The problem is approximately solved, however, by the Christian doctrine of the Atonement. This doctrine also solves the problem of the relation between the mercy and justice of God. As W. Robertson-Smith puts it: “To reconcile the forgiving goodness of God with His absolute justice is one of the highest problems of spiritual religion, which in Christianity is solved by the doctrine of the atonement.”²

1. H. B. Swete, *op. cit.*, 59.

2. W. Robertson-Smith, *The Religion of the Semites: Fundamental Institutions*, 62.